DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 346 953 PS 019 699

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TITLE The Effects of Simulation Activities on the Attitudes of Preschoolers without Handicaps toward Their Peers with Handicaps.
PUB DATE May 91
NOTE 55p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Association for the Education of Young Children (Des Moines, IA, April 17-20, 1991). Appendix C not in copy received by ERIC.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Classroom Research; *Disabilities; Early Childhood Education; Intervention; *Kindergarten Children; Lesson Plans; *Peer Acceptance; Preschool Children; *Program Effectiveness; Sex Differences; *Simulation; *Student Attitudes; Student Improvement
IDENTIFIERS *Normal Children

ABSTRACT

The relation between simulation activities and the attitudes of preschoolers without handicaps toward handicapped peers was examined. For 7 weeks, simulation activities were conducted once a week for 45 minutes with 13 nursery school/kindergarten students assigned to an experimental group. Subjects were asked to name three name-calling adjectives that made them feel sad when they heard them used by another person and three such adjectives that made them feel happy. Subjects were also asked to: (1) state three ways that they were similar to their peers and three ways they were different; (2) draw a picture of an activity they could do with a handicapped peer; (3) describe two alternatives to verbal communication; (4) name three activities in which they could engage with a physically handicapped peer; (5) name three devices that would aid a visually impaired peer; and (6) describe three characteristics of a mentally disabled peer that were common or similar to their own characteristics. Data were collected on a pre- and post-test measure from children in experimental and control groups. A significant difference between the two groups was found. Males in the experimental group indicated that they would choose to interact less frequently with handicapped peers than did females. Posttest results indicated positive gains in individual acceptance for both males and females. Lesson plans are appended. (Author/RH)

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THE EFFECTS OF SIMULATION ACTIVITIES ON THE ATTITUDES OF PRESCHOOLERS WITHOUT HANDICAPS TOWARD THEIR PEERS WITH HANDICAPS

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May 1991

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between simulation activities and the attitudes of preschoolers without handicaps toward their peers with handicaps. Data were collected on a pre and post measure with a control and experimental group. Results comparing the two groups were conducted and gender differences investigated.

Fourteen youngsters in the control group and 13 youngsters in the experimental group at a public school in a midwestern urban area served as the subjects in this investigation. Once a week for 45 minutes for 7 weeks a simulation activity was conducted by the investigator with youngsters in the experimental group. The activities topics and targeted learner outcomes are listed below.

1. Introduction/Feelings: The students would verbally state three name calling adjectives that make them feel sad when said by another person and three words that make them feel happy when said by another person.

2. Alike/Different: The students would verbally state three ways that they are similar with their peers and three ways that they are different from their peers. The students would see differences as a natural part of being a member of the human family.

3. Drama presentation of "Kids on the Block": The students would draw a picture of an activity that they can do with a peer who has a handicap.

4. Hearing Impairments: The students would verbally describe two alternative forms of communication other then the traditional verbal conversation.

5. Physical Impairments: The students would name three activities that they can do with a peer with physical disabilities.

6. Visual Impairments: The students would verbally state three different alternative devices that would aide a peer with visual impairments.

7. Mental Disabilities: The students would verbally describe three characteristics of a peer with mental disabilities that are common or similiar to characteristics of themselves.

Differences between the two groups were analyzed using a standard t test. Significant differences between the two groups could be noted at the alpha .000 level. Additionally, differences could be noted with regards to acceptance levels across genders. Males in the experimental group indicated that they would choose to interact less frequently with their peers with handicaps than did their female counterparts. Overall, posttest results indicated positive gains towards individual acceptance for both males and females.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Public Law 99-457, the Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1986, requires that all states offer educational services to children between the ages of three and five who have handicaps. For many educational institutions, the integration of preschoolers with handicaps and their same-age peers without handicaps may be difficult since many institutions do not offer preschool programs. Nevertheless, public schools must educate all children to the maximum extent possible in the least restrictive environment. In addition to the legislative mandates, special education research provides a rationale in support of integration for preschool children in regular classes (Guralnick, 1976; O'Connell, 1984). Guralnick (1976) cited the following benefits of integration (a) increased understanding and sensitivity to individual differences that children, their parents, and teachers can develop from involvement with children who have handicaps, (b) the development of framework for gauging child behavior within a developmental context, and (c) increased opportunity for children with handicaps to learn from observing and interacting with more advanced peers.

Reynolds and Birch (1982) found that one of the most critical factors that appears to influence the success of

any integration effort is the social acceptance of students with handicaps by their peers without handicaps.

A proponent of the humanist theory of development designed a hierarchy of human needs. Abraham Maslow (1968), believed that humans have certain needs, called deprivation needs that must be met before individuals can develop their most creative characteristics. The deprivation needs include physiological needs (basic needs for maintenance of the body), safety needs (shelter), belongingness needs (love,affection), and esteem needs (self-esteem and esteem from others). Only after these deprivation needs have been met can people be motivated to move up the hierarchy to address the higher order needs. Maslow emphasized that these are basic human needs and that these needs are equally essential for all youngsters with or without handicaps. One way to meet deprivation needs (addressing the desire to belong and to be respected by others) is through the process of integration. Through integration the needs of belongingness and esteem can be met. As young children with or without handicaps play and learn together, no one is left out when integrative environments are utilized. In this context then, integration is operationally defined as the placement of students with handicaps in regular classes with their peers without handicaps to the maximum extent feasible.

The law mandates for the placement of children with handicaps to receive an appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. While the physical placement of children with handicaps can be legislatively mandated, accepting behaviors and attitudes toward these youngsters cannot be legislated (Bookbinder, 1978). Clearly, intervention activities which can promote positive attitudes of preschoolers without handicaps toward their peers with handicaps need to be identified and field tested.

Limitations of the Study

This study was conducted on a sampling of nursery school/kindergarten students living in a small urban university area in northeast Iowa. Consequently, the results of this study may not apply to populations in other regions of the United States. In addition, the population sampled contained students residing in a predominately white middle class socioeconomic environment.

Another limitation to this study was that all the students in the experimental group were not present during all of the intervention activities. During the simulation activities with the experimental group, the teacher would often pull individual children away from the group to work on other school activities. She also scheduled a field trip during one of the sessions and did not notify the researcher until the day before, thus one week went by without any

intervention activity. This was found to be frustrating for the researcher due to the fact that not all children were available for all activities.

The evaluation instrument contained no minority children with disabilities. This was done purposely by the examiner because the assessment tool was designed to focus on attitudes toward disability types to the exclusion of cultural or ethnic heritage differences.

Definition of Terms

1. Integration is operationally defined as the placement of handicapped students in regular classes with their nonhandicapped peers to the maximum extent feasible.

2. The least restrictive environment (LRE) is a concept stated within Public Law 94-142. It requires that "to the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children. . . are educated with children who are not handicapped" (Section 612 (5) (B): 14).

3. The regular education initiative (REI) states that whenever possible handicapped pupils should spend as much time as possible in the regular education classroom.

Importance of the Study

With the state of Iowa supporting integration rather than segregation of students with handicaps and their same-age peers without handicaps, it is important that educators design programs to systematically prepare children to be

more comfortable with greater diversity. Positive modification of regular class children's attitudes toward children with handicaps requires positive information and experiences, replacing previously held negative associations (Simpson, 1980). Without this, effective integration cannot happen. Furthermore, research conducted by Guralnick (1981), indicates that positive social integration between students with and without handicaps is critical to the potential success of the integration of students with handicaps into regular school activities. Research has also shown that through the use of simulation intervention activities, students' attitudes toward their peers with handicaps has become more positive (Hallenbeck & McMaster, 1991; Martin & Cashdollar, 1980; Bookbinder, 1978).

Questions to be Answered

1. Will the participation in simulation intervention activities with preschool children without handicaps improve their attitudes toward their peers with handicaps?

2. Is there a difference between male and female attitudes of preschoolers without handicaps toward their peers with handicaps?

3. Which intervention activities addressing a specific handicapping condition appear to influence the attitudes of preschoolers without handicaps the most?

4. Which child with a handicap was discriminated against most following the intervention activities?

5. Which child with a handicap was discriminated against least following the intervention activities?

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The recent restructuring of Iowa's special education programs has created numerous implementation considerations with regards to placement of children with handicaps in educational programs. The proposed regular education initiative (REI) was one variable influencing Iowa educators to take a look at their placement of persons with handicaps regarding the degree of "restrictiveness." The outlook of Iowa's children with handicaps is centering around their placement within the parameters of the child's regular neighborhood school, with emphasis on the least restrictive environment. With this trend toward integration, attention needs to be directed towards the identification of attitudes of children without handicaps toward their peers with handicaps.

Over 10 years ago, then Deputy Commissioner for the Education of the Handicapped, Edwin Martin (1974), stated "we must attempt to have handicapped children in sight, in mind, and in settings where they will receive the fullest measure of our educational resources" (p.151). Yet, he cautioned that we must have strategies to enhance positive attitudes and acceptance from nonhandicapped peers or "we will be painfully naive, and I fear we will subject many

children to a painful and frustrating educational experience in the name of progress" (p.150).

It was proposed that integrating children with handicaps and children without handicaps early in life may be one of the best strategies to alleviate fears that may stifle progress toward normalization, hence community acceptance (Bricker, 1978).

An impressive study relevant to the current investigation was conducted (Fredricks, Baldwin, Grove, Moore, & Rigges, 1978). The researchers integrated 6 preschoolers with moderate-severe handicaps in a regular day care center. The children who participated in the study were enrolled in a preschool program for children with handicaps. The integration site was a day care center for normally functioning children. Selection of the children with handicapping conditions was based on the following criteria: (a) each child could emit and imitate some language behavior; and (b) the children with handicaps were within one year of chronological age of the children with no handicaps.

Two of the 6 children with handicaps were classified as autistic, 3 were mentally retarded, and 1 with a brain damaging handicap. The mean age of the children with a handicapping condition was 5 years, 1 month. The mean age

of the children without a handicapping condition was 4 years, 9 months.

Language skills were monitored on three aspects of verbal and nonverbal behavior of the children with handicaps. The first was a measure of the number of verbal initiations and responses emitted. Second, was the length of sentences or phrases emitted, and third was the percentage of time that a child interacted with his peers, both with and without handicaps, either verbally or nonverbally.

Frequency counts were taken. This data were kept prior to treatment for 5 days. Once this was done data were again taken during the treatment sessions. According to the researchers, the treatment was accomplished in the context of materials use so that, the children with handicaps were required to ask a child without handicaps for items or toys or to respond when receiving those items or toys from the child without handicaps. Reliability was obtained by comparing the two sets of data which were rated by two independent observers. It was found that the correlations were high, never falling below .85.

The second major area of measurement was the social behaviors of the children. The Parten scale (Parten, 1932) was utilized for this measurement.

The results showed that through observations of social interactions among the children, the children with handicaps avoided contact with the children without handicaps, and they in turn did not interact with the children with handicaps, (Fredricks, et al., 1978). The researchers inferred that this type of behavior would not change without intervention techniques.

In another study the subjects included 16 children without handicaps (7 boys and 9 girls) attending an integrated special education classroom, and 16 children matched for age and sex attending a preschool center for children without handicaps, (Odom, Deklyen, & Jenkins, 1984). The subjects were a heterogenous group with a mean age of 47.12 months for the integrated preschoolers, and a mean age of 48.25 months in the preschool classroom for students without handicaps.

Children in both groups were administered a battery of developmental assessments at the beginning of the academic year and again at the end. Assessments included: the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales, the Preschool Language Scale (PLS), the Uniform Performance Assessment System-Preacademic Subtest (UPAS), and the California Preschool Scale of Social Competence (CPSSC).

The results indicated that inclusion of children without handicaps in an integrated special education

preschool classroom and the exposure to peers with handicaps was not detrimental to the children without handicaps development (Odom, Deklyen, & Jenkins, 1984).

Unfortunately, little research has been conducted on effects of an intervention program to measure an attitude change of youngsters without handicaps toward their peers with handicaps. This researcher believes that investigating the efficacy of various activities to best prepare children with and without handicaps to learn and play cooperatively together must be conducted. This is especially relevent if Iowa is to maintain prominance for depicting best models for integrating children with handicaps into the regular school environment. The purpose of this study is to measure the effects of simulated activities, conducted by the examiner, on the attitude of preschoolers without handicaps toward their peers with handicaps.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

The subjects were 27 nursery school kindergarten students (15 female, 12 male) between the ages of 4.2 years to 6.6 years from a university laboratory school in a midwestern metropolitan area. The mean age of the children was 5.1 years at the beginning of the study and 5.4 years at the end of the study. Enrollment in the school is contingent upon residency in the district.

The children were randomly assigned to either the morning class or the afternoon class at registration time. Both classes were pretested and posttested. One class session was randomly assigned as the experimental group and the other was assigned as the control. The examiner chose to use only one classroom with the same teacher for maintaining control. Additionally, the examiner was the only person conducting the intervention activities.

Instruments

The measurement instrument consisted of an assessment battery containing 8 personal attitudinal questions. Because of the young age of the students, a 4-page picture response booklet consisting of differing colors of paper stapled together was developed. Each page held only two response scales, with each scale divided by a heavy black

line divider. At the top of the right hand corner of each scale was an object (i.e., star, apple) that the examiner would refer to before asking the students the stem question in order to keep children on the right scale for the stem question. On each page there were pictures of 5 children (4 depicting a handicapping condition and 1 depicting no handicapping condition). The examiner would ask the stem question designed to elicit learner responses and then request the children to circle all of the children with which they would like to engage with on a specific activity relevant to the stem question (see Appendix B). The instrument was administered to the students during their respective classroom time, before the simulation intervention was implemented (pretest) and again 8 weeks later when the intervention ended (posttest).

The examiner instructed the students to turn to the appropriate colored page, holding the assigned color in front of the students to match (due to their young developmental level). After the students had turned to appropriate page, they were told to find the designated object at the upper right hand corner. After observing that all of the children were on the appropriate page, the stem was read (see Appendix B). Each stem item was read three times and each child was instructed to circle all of the children with which they would want to engage with on a

particular activity. It was stressed that there were no right or wrong responses for the stem questions. Three volunteers circulated around the room to ensure independent response.

Procedure

Following the pretest measures, 7 intervention activites were implemented with all the children in the experimental group. Each intervention activity consisted of a lesson which incorporated simulation activities, each with prespecified learner outcomes. Each activity was taught for 45 minutes, 1 day per week across a 7 week period. The simulation activities covered the following topics: Activity 1, introduction/feelings; Activity 2, alike/different; Activity 3, drama presentation of "Kids on the Block"; Activity 4, hearing impairments; Activity 5, physical impairments; Activity 6, visual impairments; and Activity 7, mental impairments (see Appendix A). Students in the control group did not participate in the simulated activities.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Three separate t tests were performed on the pretest/posttest data. The first t test was used to compare the differences between the control group's pretest grand means and their posttest grand means. This test showed that there was no significant difference between the pretest and posttest results (.227).

The second t test was performed to compare the differences between the experimental group's pretest grand means and their posttest grand means. This test indicated that there was a significant difference between the pretest and posttest results (.000).

The third t test was conducted to compare the differences between the pretest grand means and the posttest grand means of the control and experimental groups. This test showed a significant difference (.000).

After analyses were conducted in these three areas, another t test was performed in order to compare the pretest grand means only of the control and experimental group. A significant difference (.004) proved that prior to treatment a difference already appeared. The subjects of the 2 groups were randomly assigned in hopes to prevent this difference prior to treatment.

Disability differences tables were constructed in order to compare pretest and posttest differences of specific disabilities. On each table listed under the heading "pictures" are the various disabilities that the students were able to choose. Under the headings "pretest" and "posttest" are the number of times that specific disability was chosen. Lastly, under the heading of "difference" is the gain or loss between the 2 tests. The examiner chose to break the disability differences tables down by control and experimental responses as well as by gender (boy/girl).

Table 1 (control group and experimental group) shows the greatest difference between pretest and posttest choices of the control group only for the pictures of children with handicaps to be the boy who is physically handicapped and uses a wheelchair for mobilization (+15). The second greatest difference was the boy who is hearing impaired (+13). The nonhandicapped boy showed the least difference (-8), in fact, he was more discriminated against in the posttest then in the pretest. The child with Downs Syndrome showed no difference between pretest and posttest results (0).

The table depicts for the experimental group the greatest difference with the boy with Downs Syndrome (+34) and also with the boy who is physically handicapped and uses a wheelchair for mobilization (+33). The children which

TABLE 1
Disability Differences-Experimental and Control Groups

Picture	Pretest		Posttest		Difference	
	C	E	C	E	C	E
Physically Handicapped (g) (elbow crutches)	30	10	35	35	+5	+25
Physically Handicapped (g) (traditional crutches)	32	13	42	35	+10	+22
Physically Handicapped (b) (wheelchair)	20	2	35	35	+15	+33
Mentally Handicapped (b) (Downs Syndrome)	19	2	19	36	0	+34
Mentally Handicapped (g) (Downs Syndrome)	16	8	18	34	+2	+26
Visually Handicapped (g) (glasses)	29	15	34	31	+5	+16
Hearing Impaired (b) (tact-aides)	23	10	36	38	+13	+28
Nonhandicapped (b) (tall)	32	31	24	46	-8	+15
Nonhandicapped (b)	35	33	41	49	+6	+16
Nonhandicapped (g)	45	35	48	49	+3	+14

showed the least growth were the girl and boy with no handicaps (+14 and +15) respectively.

Table 2 (control and experimental groups- boys) shows the greatest difference for the control group to be with the boy with physical disabilities who requires a wheelchair for mobilization (+7). The least difference showed a (-3) for the boy with no handicaps and the boy with Downs Syndrome (-2).

For the experimental group (boys), the table shows a positive difference with the girl with no handicaps (+11) and the boy with Downs Syndrome (+11). The least differences were found in the boys without handicaps (+3). It must be noted that during pretest results these choices were already the most frequently chosen, therefore, the reason for them showing the least difference can be speculated.

Table 3 (control and experimental groups-girls) indicates that for the control group the greatest difference was with the boy with physical disabilities who requires a wheelchair for mobilization (+9). The second largest difference appeared with the boy with a hearing impairment (+7). The least difference appeared with the boy with no handicaps (-5) and with the girl with physical disabilities who required elbow crutches who showed no difference.

TABLE 2
Disability Differences-Experimental and Control Groups-Boys Only

Picture	Pretest		Posttest		Differences	
	C	E	C	E	C	E
Physically Handicapped (g) (elbow crutches)	13	0	17	8	+4	+8
Physically Handicapped (g) (traditional crutches)	13	1	19	8	+6	+7
Physically Handicapped (b) (wheelchair)	12	1	19	8	+7	+7
Mentally Handicapped (b) (Downs Syndrome)	16	0	14	11	-2	+11
Mentally Handicapped (g) (Downs Syndrome)	13	1	12	10	-1	+9
Visually Handicapped (g) (glasses)	15	2	16	8	+1	+6
Hearing Impaired (b) (tact-aides)	22	7	19	11	-3	+4
Nonhandicapped (b) (tall)	18	22	22	25	-3	+3
Nonhandicapped (b)	18	18	22	21	+4	+3
Nonhandicapped (g)	16	10	17	21	+1	+11

TABLE 3
Disability Differences-Experimental and Control Groups-Girls Only

Picture	Pretest		Posttest		Difference	
	C	E	C	E	C	E
Physically Handicapped (g) (elbow crutches)	18	10	18	27	0	+17
Physically Handicapped (g) (traditional crutches)	19	12	23	27	+4	+15
Physically Handicapped (b) (wheelchair)	7	1	16	27	+9	+26
Mentally Handicapped (b) (Downs Syndrome)	3	2	6	25	+3	+23
Mentally Handicapped (g) (Downs Syndrome)	4	7	6	24	+2	+17
Visually Handicapped (g) (glasses)	14	13	18	23	+4	+10
Hearing Impaired (b) (tact-aides)	10	3	17	27	+7	+24
Nonhandicapped (b) (tall)	10	9	5	26	-5	+17
Nonhandicapped (b)	17	15	19	28	+2	+13
Nonhandicapped (g)	29	25	31	28	+2	+3

For the experimental group girls, the table indicates that the most difference was with the boy with physical disabilities who requires a wheelchair for mobilization (+26). There was also a significant difference with the boy with a hearing impairment (+24). The least difference appeared with the girl without handicaps (+3). However, this choice was most chosen on the pretest, thus not allowing for a great difference on the posttest. The girl with a visual impairment also shows a low difference (+10).

In order to see the growth of the experimental group, their differences will be discussed. Positive gains were indicated by the change scores for the boy with Downs Syndrome, the boy with physical disabilities that requires him to use a wheelchair for mobilization, the girl with no handicaps and the boy with a hearing impairment. It appears the simulation activities created positive attitudinal changes with regards to these youngsters (see Appendix A).

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to determine the effects of simulation activities on the attitudes of preschoolers without handicaps toward their peers with handicaps. The study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. Will the participation in simulation activities with preschool children without handicaps improve their attitudes toward their peers with handicaps?

2. Is there a difference between male and female attitudes of preschoolers without handicaps toward their peers with handicaps?

3. Which intervention activities addressing a specific handicapping condition appear to influence the attitudes of preschoolers without handicaps the most?

4. Which child with a handicapping condition was discriminated against most following the intervention activities?

5. Which child with a handicapping condition was discriminated against least following the intervention activities?

The pretest/posttest measures indicate that the implementation of simulation activities did improve preschool children's attitudes of their peers with handicaps in a positive constructive manner (.000). The examiner also

observed positive comments and growth during each implementation session with the experimental group. The youngsters were eager to learn about each specific disability. This was observed by discussion comments and body language (i.e., smiling, sitting up, nodding). The second question to be answered involved the difference of gender of the experimental group as it compares to their pretest and posttest growth. It was found that the female preschoolers were more accepting of individual differences than the males (see Table 4). The examiner speculates that this may be due to the conditioning of their environments as to what is a male role verses what is a female role. When working with the experimental groups, the researcher observed that the females were more nurturing than the males. Comments made by the females were; "I would help them if they couldn't do something," or "I would be their friend." The male comments centered around a more physical mind-frame. For example, "But if they couldn't walk then they couldn't play football." In conclusion, the examiner believes that gender roles may have played a part in the gender growth difference.

A third question to be answered involved the simulation activities that appeared to influence attitudes the most with the experimental group youngsters. The boy with Downs Syndrome made high positive gains between pretest and

TABLE 4

Comparison of Disability Differences Gender Gains

Experimental Group Only

Picture	Boys	Girls
Physically Handicapped (g) (elbow crutches)	+8	+25
Physically Handicapped (g) (traditional crutches)	+7	+22
Physically Handicapped (b) (wheelchair)	+7	+33
Mentally Handicapped (b) (Downs Syndrome)	+11	+34
Mentally Handicapped (g) (Downs Syndrome)	+9	+26
Visually Handicapped (g) (glasses)	+6	+16
Hearing Impaired (b) (tact-aides)	+4	+28
Nonhandicapped (b) (tall)	+3	+15
Nonhandicapped (b)	+3	+16
Nonhandicapped (g)	+11	+14

posttest. This activity was the last to be taught. That in itself may have been part of the reason since it was the freshest in their minds. The objective for this activity was that the students could be able to verbally describe three characteristics of a peer with mental disabilities that are common or similiar to characteristics of themselves (see Appendix A). Objectives were measured daily by the examiner using a quick verbal evaluation procedure where the examiner would go around the group asking each child to describe characteristics. When more than one answer was necessary, the examiner would ask the students to state one that hadn't been said.

The lesson pertaining to the boy with physical disabilities who used a wheelchair for mobilization was also demonstrated to impact student attitudes (see Appendix A and Tables 1-3). The objective for this lesson was that the students will name three activities that they can do with a peer with physical disabilities. For this lesson the examiner brought in various devices that persons with physical handicaps may use (i.e., wheelchair, crutches, walkers). The children were able to manipulate and experiment with the devices. The examiner speculated that this manipulation and familiarization with devices helped the students to become less apprehensive toward their peers with disabilities.

The last questions needed to be answered involved which child with disabilities was least and most discriminated by indication of the results of the pre and post score change in the experimental group. It was found that the child with a handicap most discriminated against was the boy with Downs Syndrome and the boy with physical disabilities who uses a wheelchair for mobilization. The examiner speculates that this discrimination may be greatly due to the physical appearance of the children. A child with Downs Syndrome has specific facial features that are not typical for a child without handicaps and the same is true for the child with the physical disabilities. The "looking" different is therefore what this examiner speculates as causing this discrimination. The children least discriminated against were the girl with visual impairments that caused her to wear glasses and the girl with physical disabilities who used traditional crutches for mobilization. Again, the examiner speculates that these children were less discriminated against due to the fact that glasses and traditional crutches are more commonplace and familiar to the youngsters.

When examining the 7 simulation activities that were designed by the researcher, they appear to have been effective in influencing attitude change. The activities were designed so that any early childhood instructor could

implement them in his/her classroom. Materials were borrowed from the local Area Education Agency, public library, and/or were already available in the nursery kindergarten classroom. The examiner involved all of the classroom children and allowed for an honest open discussion. The concrete materials offered in the activities were appropriate for the youngsters developmental levels and added to the retention of each activity.

If this study was implemented again, the examiner would recommend that implementation be 2 times per week rather than 1 time per week. Meeting with the children 1 day per week did show results, however, it was noted that sometimes the activities were rushed due to time factor restrictions. This examiner found that the time allotted of 45 minutes per session was substantial for this age group.

Summary

With the growing impetus on the merger of regular and special education systems, the need for preparing youngsters for this venture needs to be systematically addressed.

This study has indicated that for these youngsters an attitudinal change was evident as a result of participating in the simulation activities. Earlier research has also supported this finding (Hallenbeck & McMaster, 1991; Martin & Cashdollar, 1980; Bookbinder, 1978).

It is recommended that further research in this area be conducted. It has been noted that the preschool years are the most influential in the development of attitudes and values. It is during this stage that attitudes and values regarding individual differences are being developed. This researcher believes if preschoolers without handicaps can experience simulation activities or interact with their peers with handicaps then positive acceptance of individual differences can be formed.

Our young children are our nation's future. Clearly, the more experiences with individuals depicting a vast array of differences that we as adults and educators can expose children to will ultimately benefit our society as a whole.

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Appendix A

Lesson Plans

Activity 1: FEELINGS

Objective: The students will verbally state three name calling adjectives that make them feel sad when said by another person and three words that make them feel happy when said by another person.

I. Role Playing

The teacher will begin the role playing by telling students what to say. The teacher will pick two children and ask them to come before the group. The teacher will have one student tell the other, one thing that he/she likes about him/her. The teacher will ask the student how that made them feel. The teacher will also have the other student do the same. The teacher will discuss this with the group. "How does it make you feel when someone says something nice?" Then the teacher will have the student say "I don't like . . . ." Lastly, a discussion will center around how that made them feel. Continue to do so with various children.

II. Word List

The children will generate words that make them feel happy and words that make them feel sad. The teacher will

have a large piece of paper with both headings and write the childrens' responses. Each student will be asked.

III. Feeling Cards

The children will each receive a playing card with a picture of a smiling face on one side and a picture of a frowning face on the other. The teacher will cover the words that earlier had been written down, and state the words to the children. Their job is to hold up the side of the card which states how that word made them feel. The teacher then asks the question "Why did you hold up the _____ side?"

IV. Cumulating Activity

The students will have a challenge to say only nice things to each other throughout the rest of the school day and to ask one other person that they usually don't play with to play or sit by them in an activity.

Activity 2: Likenesses & Differences

Objective: The students will verbally state three ways that they are similar with their peers and three ways that they are different from their peers. The students will see differences as a natural part of being a member of the human family.

I. Puppets

The teacher will show two hand puppets to the students. The teacher will state things that the puppets like and dislike. The teacher will then ask the students to state things that made them alike and things that made them different. Since the puppets will look different also, the teacher will accept comments pertaining to their physical features as well.

II. Look!

A large mirror will be placed in the middle of a group circle so all children can see it. The teacher will have two children stand in front of the mirror. The other students will look at the two and generate ideas for the following types of questions: "How are ____ and ____ alike?"; "How are they different?" "How do you know that?"

III. Picture Cube

Make two picture cubes using various pictures of children (include pictures of children with and without handicaps). Have children take turns rolling the dice (cube). When the dice have stopped ask the children to name the pictures' likenesses and differences.

IV. People Packages

Class is presented with two different wrapped packages. One is packaged desirably (shoe box wrapped in tin foil with a beautiful red bow on top) the other undesirably (same sized shoe box wrapped in newspaper, tapped together with band-aids, and no bow). The teacher tells the students that they may choose which package they want to open as a class and that both contain a present! Leave the boxes in the classroom throughout the week (up high enough that they may still see the boxes but cannot touch) and that next week a vote will be taken and the whole class may have what's inside.

In the desirable box there is shredded newspaper, in the undesirable box there are suckers but, don't tell the kids!

Activity 3: Play- "Kids on the Block"

Objective: The students will draw a picture of an activity that they can do with a peer who has a handicap.

Performers of the play "Kids on the Block" will act out, using large puppets, children with various disabilities. This performance will act as the introduction to teaching the children about handicapping conditions. After the play has taken place, begin a discussion with the children.

"How were the children like you?"

"How were the children different?"

"What kinds of things did the children enjoy doing?"

"Do you enjoy doing that too?"

* Students will be able to vote on the "people package" that they wish to open as a class present.

Activity 4: Hearing Impairments

Objective: The students will verbally describe two alternative forms of communication other then the traditional verbal conversation.

I. Introduction

Read story, "I Have a Sister. My Sister is Deaf" by J.W. Peterson, Harper, 1977. Discuss the story with the children.

II. Unfair Hearing Test

From "Kids Come in Different Flavors" the teacher will play the tape, the Unfair Spelling Test, but instead of having the children write the word, the teacher will stop the tape after the word is given and then ask the students to verbalize what word was said. Discuss the simulation experience. Ask open-ended questions.

III. Alternative Hearing Devices

The teacher will bring various forms of hearing devices. Tact-aides, behind the ear aide, in the ear aide to show the children. Allow them to touch, see, and manipulate the aides. Along with this demonstration, the teacher will have an older student from the school whom is

hearing impaired, come and discuss how he found out and how it feels. He will also answer any questions the students may have about his impairment.

IV. Alternative Communication Devices

The children will be given handouts of the sign alphabet as well as information to share with their parents. The teacher will teach the students the sign alphabet as well as other simple signs (i.e., cat, color words, dog, cookie, drink, please, thank you, pizza). The teacher will also ask the students if they know of any signs (some children know "I love you"). The challenge will be that during snack the students must sign please, cookie, drink, thank you, and more. Have those children who do know, help those who do not.

*Don't forget the "people packages."

Activity 5: Physical Impairments

Objective: The students will name three activities that they can do with a peer with physical disabilities.

I. Introduction

Read the story, "About Handicaps" by S. B. Stein, 1974. Then discuss the story with the group.

II. Obstacle Course and Simulation :

Use chairs or cones and set up a course and using borrowed wheelchairs, crutches, walkers; have the children attempt to negotiate the course. Also have the children attempt to use the restroom, get a drink from the fountain, and go through closed doors.

III. Tactile Impairment

Have children put on mittens. Then have students write their name using various writing utensils (pencil, marker, crayon) also have the students use manipulatives such as legoes. Discuss: "What can you do if you can't hold a crayon in your hand?" "Can you hold it somewhere else in order to write?"

IV. Arm/Shoulder Restraints

Place children in simple restraints (from Kids Come in Different Flavors). Then allow them to eat, drink from a glass, reach for things across a table. Again discuss.

V. Regroup for Sharing

Bring children back, calm down by reading story, "Nick Joins In" by Joe Lasker, 1980. Then facilitate discussion of the simulation activities.

*Don't forget the "people packages."

Activity 6: Visual Impairments

Objective: The students will verbally state three different alternative devices that will aide a peer with visual impairments.

I. Introduction

Read the following book to the children, "Sally Can't See", by Palle Petersen, The John Day Co.: New York, 1976.

II. Braille

The teacher will introduce the Braille form of reading explaining the whys of this alternative device. The teacher, after giving each child a braille alphabet card, will instruct the children to close their eyes and feel the rise of the letters. The teacher will give then give each child a 3x5 index card with his/her name printed on it. The teacher will ask the children to locate the letters of his/her name on the braille alphabet card. The children will then spell their name. A discussion will follow.

III. Spectacles

The teacher will then read the book "Spectacles" by Ellen Raskin, Atheneum: New York, 1968. After the book, the class will discuss Laurel's need for glasses. If there are

children in the class with glasses, the teacher will have them explain what it is like without wearing their glasses. The children will then be given various spectacle frames (with the glass removed) to try on to see how they would look in glasses.

IV. Making Glasses

Materials (i.e., colored and clear cellophane, pipe cleaners, card board) will be set out so the children may construct their own glasses.

V. Cumulating Activity

Have class come back and join a large group, have them generate a list of devices that would aid a child with visual impairments.

Activity 7: Mental Disabilities

Objective: The students will verbally describe three characteristics of a peer with mental disabilities that are common or similiar to characteristics of themselves.

I. Introduction

The teacher will begin the days activities by reading the book, "A Look at Mental Retardation" by Maria Forrai, Lerner Publications Inc., 1976. Discussion to follow.

II. What's on the tray?

The teacher will place 10 objects (i.e., block, truck, pencil, paint brush, lego) on a tray in the middle of the group circle. The tray will be covered. The teacher will tell the students that there are 10 things on the tray and she wants them to look when she uncovers it and quietly say to themselves all of the things that they see. After the teacher has explained and asked if they have any questions, she lifts the cover. She allows the children to look at the objects for 15 seconds and then covers it. She will then go around the group and ask each student to say all of the objects that he/she can remember. Discuss: "Was it easy or hard?" "Why?" "Could you remember everything?" "How could you help your friend remember if he couldn't?"

"How did it make you feel, not being able to remember?" "Would it have helped to have had more time to look?" If the children say yes, then increase the time limit by 5 seconds.

III. Color Sheet with a timer

Ask the students to color as nicely and as carefully as they can trying hard to stay within the lines using crayolas. Set the timer for 20 seconds and have the children begin. Discuss: "Was it easy or hard?" "How did you feel?" "Did you do your very best?" "Did you get done before the timer went off?" "Why?"

IV. Cumulating Activity

Bring children back into group. Discuss how children with mental disabilities can do the things that they can do only they need more time to get it done. Show pictures of children with mental disabilities and ask the children to state how they are like them. Compile a chart. End the lesson with the book,"Someone Special Just Like You", by Tricia Brown, Holt, Rinehart and Winston: New York, 1982.

Stem Questions

"Circle all of the children you would like to . . .

1. play with out for recess."

2. sit with at your small group table."

3. swim with at the pool."

4. invite to spend the night."

5. sit with during lunch."

6. invite to your birthday party."

7. play with during free-choice time."

8. invite over to your house after school."

Appendix C

Assessment Tool